

**Amendments to the Claims:**

- (1) Please amend claims 1, and 5-6.
- (2) Please add new claims 7-15.
- (3) Please cancel 2-4 claims without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A biodegradable auricular prosthetic device, particularly but not exclusively devised for the treatment of otitis media, comprising a tubular body having axially opposed ends and flanged at least at one of said opposed ends and at least a portion of which is produced from a material subject to biological degradation in the presence of organic liquids, characterized in that at least said portion made of material subject to biological degradation is produced from a polymeric material selected from the group of polyphosphazenes; wherein said tubular body has a duct defined therethrough; wherein at least said portion made of material subject to biological degradation has variable biodegradability characteristics along the axial extension of said tubular body; and wherein said tubular body, in an intermediate portion thereof comprised between said ends, has a greater biodegradability with respect to the biodegradability of said flange.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Cancelled).

Claim 5 (Currently amended): ~~[[A]]The~~ prosthetic device according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein said body is flanged at both said opposed ends in a bobbin shape.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): ~~[[A]]The~~ prosthetic device according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 5, wherein there are incorporated into said polymeric material substances selected from the group consisting of drugs, growth factors, bacteriostatic substances ~~and/or, and~~ bactericides, ~~singly or in admixture with one another.~~

Claim 7 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 6, wherein one of said flanges is made of a biodegradable polymeric material selected from the group of polyphosphazene, said biodegradable flange is located at said end of said tubular body having the greatest rate of biodegradability.

Claim 8 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 7, wherein the speed of degradation of said tubular body material is greater than the speed of degradation of said flange.

Claim 9 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 8, wherein said biodegradable flange further comprising a pointed appendage extending out therefrom, said appendage being adapted to perforate the tympanic membrane when inserted into an ear.

Claim 10 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 1, wherein said flange is oblique with respect to the axis of said tubular body, and said flange is located at said end of said tubular body having the lowest rate of biodegradability.

Claim 11 (New): A biodegradable auricular prosthetic device for ventilating the middle ear of a patient, said prosthetic device comprising:

- a tubular body having axially opposed ends and a duct defined therethrough,

- said tubular body being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes, wherein said tubular body has variable biodegradability characteristics along the axial extension of said tubular body;

- an inner flange attached to said end of said tubular body having the greatest rate of biodegradability, said inner flange being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes; and

- an outer flange attached to said end opposite said inner flange;

- wherein there are incorporated into said polymeric material substances selected from the group consisting of drugs, growth factors, bacteriostatic substances, and bactericides;

- wherein the speed of degradation of said tubular body material is greater than the speed of degradation of said inner flange.

Claim 12 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 11, wherein said inner flange further comprising a pointed appendage extending out therefrom, said appendage being adapted to perforate the tympanic membrane when inserted into the ear.

Claim 13 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 12, wherein said outer flange being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group consisting of polyphosphazenes.

Claim 14 (New): The prosthetic device according to claim 13, wherein the speed of degradation of said tubular body material is greater than the speed of degradation of said outer flange.

Claim 15 (New): A biodegradable auricular prosthetic device comprising:

- a tubular body having axially opposed ends and a duct defined therethrough, said tubular body being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes, wherein said tubular body has variable biodegradability characteristics along the axial extension of said tubular body;
  - an inner flange attached to said end of said tubular body having the greatest rate of biodegradability, said inner flange being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes;
  - a pointed appendage extending out from said inner flange away from said tubular body, said appendage being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes; and
  - an outer flange attached to said end opposite said inner flange, said outer flange being made of material subject to biological degradation selected from the group of polyphosphazenes;
- wherein there are incorporated into said polymeric material substances selected from the group consisting of drugs, growth factors, bacteriostatic substances, and bactericides;
- wherein the speed of degradation of said tubular body material is greater than the speed of degradation of said inner and outer flanges.